

Abstract

This is a study on “Thai Government Guidelines on Alien Workers”. The objective of the research was to study the Thai government's policy on alien/migrant workers during 1992-2005. The results showed that the push factors driving migrant workers to seek employment in Thailand, a destination country, included economic conditions, strict control of migration and political situation while the pull factors attracting their migration included availability of unsought-for work, better earnings in Thailand, easy border crossing and inadequate control at the border by government officials. The problems facing the work of the Thai government were due to several factors.

First, it could not be determined what were the real numbers of migrant workers especially in agriculture and fishery sectors.

Second, there were a large number of Burmese, Lao and Cambodian workers that the employers could not have registered because of their illegal status. The illegal entry thus made both the employers and workers liable to punishment.

Third, the situation was marked by lack of coordination between agencies concerned. For instance, Immigration Bureau of the Royal Thai Police arrests while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was more concerned with the overall image of the country's humanitarian operations.

Fourth, there was an issue of budgetary constraints. The government was unable to allocate sufficient budgets to agencies concerned. For instance, the payment of compensations or salaries to government officials and workers was often delayed. Responsible agencies did not possess modern tools and equipment, thus making it difficult to collect information within the time frame.

The researcher proposed that the government should have long-term measures. For example, there should be a clear policy. Laws and regulations should be reviewed so that the government workers can implement them, including simplifying various processes. The policy should be more proactive with an emphasis on creating

good relationships with neighboring countries that share the border with Thailand. Support should be given to the establishment of an international organization on labor issues that fostered inter-governmental coordination.

For short-term measures, the government should declare an amnesty for illegal migrant workers already in Thailand. This would project a good image for Thailand. In addition, the government should set up a special unit for labor conciliation, thus making budget allocation more effective and feasible.